

ذَدَامَائِيْ مِنْ ذَجَرَانَ أَلَا تَلَاقِيَا  
 وَقَيْسَائِيْ بِأَعْلَى حَضْرَمَوْتَ الْيَمَانِيَا  
 صَرِيْحَيْهِمْ وَالْأَخَرِيْنَ الْمَوَالِيَا  
 تَرِيْ خَلْفَهَا الْكَوْجِيَادَ تَوَالِيَا  
 وَكَانَ الرِّمَاحُ يَخْتَطِفُنَ الْمُحَامِيَا  
 كَانَ لَمْ تَرَا قَبْلِيْ أَسِيْدِرَا يَمَانِيَا  
 أَنَّا الْلَّيْثُ مَعْدُوْ عَلَيْهِ وَعَادِيَا  
 أَمْعَشَرَ تَيْمَ أَطْلَقُوْرِيْ لِسَانِيَا  
 فَانَ أَخَاْكِمَ لَمْ يَكُنْ مِنْ بَوَانِيَا  
 وَأَنَّ تَطْلُقُوْرِيْ تَحْرِبُوْرِيْ بِمَالِيَا  
 ذَشِيدَ الرُّعَاءِ الْمُعْزِيْبِيْنَ الْمَتَالِيَا  
 وَأَصْدَعَ بَيْنَ الْقَيْدَتِيْنَ رَدَائِيَا  
 بِكَفِيْ وَقَدْ أَنْجَوْهُ إِلَيْهِ الْعَوَالِيَا  
 لِخَيْلِيْ كُرِيْ نَفْسِيْ عَنْ رِجَالِيَا  
 لِأَيْسَارِ صِدْقِيْ أَعْظَمُوْهُ ضَوءَ ذَارِيَا  
 فِيَا رَأَيْهَا إِمَّا عَرَضَتْ فَبَلَغَهَا  
 أَبَا كَرْبَ وَالْأَيْهَمِيْنَ كَلَيْهِمَا  
 جَزِيَ اللَّهُ قَوْمِيْ بِالْكَلَابِ مَلَامَهَا  
 وَلَوْ شَدَّتْ ذَجَنِيْ مِنَ الْخَيْلِ ذَهَدَهَا  
 وَلِكَنِيْ أَحْمِيْ فِيْ مَارَأَيِكِيْهَا  
 وَتَضَكَّ مِنِيْ شَيْخَهَا عَبْشَمِيَا  
 وَقَدْ عَلَمَتْ عَرَسِيْ مَلِيْكَهَا أَنْدِيَا  
 أَقُولُ وَقَدْ شَدَّوا لِسَانِيْ بِنَسْعَهَا  
 أَمْعَشَرَ تَيْمَ قَدْ عَلَكُتُمْ فَأَسْجَحَوْهَا  
 فَانَ تَقْتَلُوْرِيْ تَقْتَلُوْرِيْ سِيدَهَا  
 أَحَقَّا عَبَادَ اللَّهِ أَنَّ لَسْتُ سَامِعًا  
 وَقَدْ كُنْتُ ذَهَارَ الْجَزَرِ وَمُحَمَّلَ الْمَطَيِّ وَأَهْضِيْ حَيْثُ لَا حَيْ مَاضِيَا  
 وَأَنْجَرَ لِلشَّرِبِ الْكَوَامَ مَطِيَّتِيْ  
 وَعَادِيَهَا سَوْمَ الْجَرَادَ وَزَعْلَهَا  
 كَانَ لَمْ أَرْكَبَ جَوَادًا وَلَمْ أَقْلُ  
 وَلَمْ أَسْبَأَ الْزِقَّ الرَّوِيِّ وَلَمْ أَقْلُ

Upbraid me not, ye twain ! shame is it enough for me

to be as I am : no gain in upbraiding to you or me.

Know ye not that in reproach there is little that profits men ?

It was not my wont to blame my brother when I was free.

O rider, if thou lightest on those men who drank with me

in Nejrân aforetime, say—‘ Ye shall never see him more ! ’

—Abû Kerib and those twin el-Eyhem, the twain of them,

and Qeys of el-Yemen who dwells in the uplands of Hadramaut.

5 May God requite with shame my people for el-Kulâb—  
 those of them of pure race, and the others born of slaves !  
 Had it been my will, there had borne me far away from their horse  
 a swift mare, behind whom the black steeds lag in a slackening  
 throng :  
 But it was my will to shield the men of your father's house,  
 and the spears all missed the man who stood as his fellows' shield.  
 The matron of 'Abd-Shems laughed as she saw me led in bonds,  
 as though she had seen before no captive of el-Yemen :  
 But one knows—Muleykeh my wife—that time was when I stood forth  
 a lion in fight, whether men bore against me or I led on.

10 I said to them when they bound my tongue with a leathern thong  
 —‘ O kinsmen of Teym, I pray you, leave me my tongue yet free !  
 ‘ O kinsmen of Teym, ye hold me fast : treat me gently then ;  
 ‘ the brother ye lost was not the equal in place of me.  
 ‘ And if ye must slay me, let me die at least as a lord ;  
 ‘ and if ye will let me go, take in ransom all my wealth.’  
 Is it truth, ye servants of God—I shall hear no more the voice  
 of herdsmen who shout for their camels in the distant grazing-  
 grounds ?  
 Yea, many a beast did I slay, and many a camel urge  
 to her swiftest, and journey steadfast where no man dared to go ;

15 And oftentimes I slew for my fellows my camel at the feast,  
 and oftentimes I rent my robe in twain for two singing-girls,  
 And oftentimes withstood a host like locusts that swept on me  
 with my hand alone, when all the lances on me were turned.  
 Now am I as though I never had mounted a noble steed,  
 or called to my horsemen—‘ Charge ! give our footmen breathing-  
 space !’  
 Or bought the full skin of wine for much gold, or shouted loud  
 to my comrades stout—‘ Heap high the blaze of our beacon-fire !’

## NOTES.

The metre is the *Tawîl*, second form.

v. 4. Of the persons mentioned in this verse Ibn-el-Athîr (Kâmil, Vol. I, p. 469) says that Abû-Kerib was Bishr son of 'Alqameh son of el-Hârith, while the two el-Eyhem (*Eyhem* means foolish, stupid, and was given as a nickname to many people : two kings of Ghassân bore it) were el-Aswad son of 'Alqameh son of el-Hârith, and el-'Âqib (*the chief, lord*), whose full name was 'Abd-el-Mesîh son of el-Abyâd ; Qeys was Qeys son of Ma'dî-Kerib. Of these the last was chief of the tribe of Kindeh, and was surnamed *el-Ashâjj*, “the Scarred” ; he was praised by el-A'shâ. El-'Âqib and el-Aswad el-Eyhem were two leaders of the deputation from Nejrân to Mohammed at el-Medîneh in A. H. 9. Of the first I have been able to discover nothing further.

v. 6. This verse is variously given. Ibn-el-Athîr (*l. c.*) reads—

وَلَوْ شِئْتُ نَجْتَنِي مِنَ الْقَوْمِ شَطْبَةً تَرَى خَلْفَهَا الْكُمْتَ الْعِتَاقَ تَوَالِيَا

et-Tebrîzî, in his commentary on the Hamâseh (p. 298), quotes it thus :

وَلَوْ شِئْتُ نَجْتَنِي مِنَ الْخَيْلِ شَطْبَةً تَرَى خَلْفَهَا الْجُرْدَ الْعِتَاقَ مَتَالِيَا

Caussin de Perceval (Essai, ii. 589), apparently following the Kitâb-el-'Iqd, reads—

وَلَوْ شِئْتُ نَجْتَنِي مِنَ الْخَيْلِ مَهْرَةً تَرَى خَلْفَهَا الْجُرْدَ الْجِسَانَ مَوَالِيَا

The first and second readings in the first hemistich give *shatbeh*, a mare light of flesh and active, instead of our *nahdeh* : the third gives *muhrah*, a young mare ; in the second hemistich, instead of our *el-hunw-el-jiyâd*, “the noble black horses,” Ibn-el-Athîr reads “the noble (*itâq*) bays,” et-Tebrîzî, “the noble short-haired steeds” (*jurd*), and C. de Perceval “the beautiful short-haired steeds.” As the last word of the verse *tawâliyâ* (plural of *tâliyek*, “following”) is decidedly best ; *mawâliyâ*, C. de P.’s reading, seems to be a word-play on the reading *itâq*, since it means *slaves* in opposition to *free-born* (*itâq*) : such a play is foreign to old Arab verse. *Et-tâli* is a special word used for the fourth horse in a race where ten run, and thus appropriately describes the place of the pursuers.

v. 7. *Dimâr* has the same meaning as *haqiqah*, *viz.*, the persons whom it is one’s duty to defend. I am somewhat doubtful of the rendering of the second hemistich of this verse. I have taken *yekhtatîfna* as meaning “missed,” which is apparently a possible sense ; but it may also mean “carried away, suddenly took possession of,” and may refer to his having been taken prisoner while he covered the retreat of his tribe.

v. 8. “Of ‘Abd-Shems,” that is, descended from ‘Abd-Shems, son of Sa‘d, son of Zeyd-Menât, son of Temîm.

v. 10. “Teym.” This family did not belong to Temîm, but was one of the *Ribâb*, or five confederate tribes, whose fortunes were at this time linked to those of Temîm : the five were Dâbbeh, Teym, ‘Adî ibn ‘Abd-Menât, ‘Okl, and Thaur ; they were all descended from Udd, son of Tâbikhah son of Ilyâs. Teym is probably shortened for Teym-el-Lât, (“servant of el-Lât”) a name borne by many of the Arab families, which Mohammed changed into Teym-allâh (“servant of God”).

v. 12. The last words of the second hemistich (*tâhrubûni bimâliyâ*) may be more literally rendered “despoil me of all my wealth.”

v. 13. “Ye servants of God,” *ibâda-llâhi* : there is reason to suspect that this has been altered from *ibâda-llâti*, “servants of el-Lât,” which would be a paraphrase of the name of the tribe he was addressing, Teym-el-Lât. *El-metâli*, plural of *el-mutli*, means “she camels having their young ones following them” ; *mo‘zibûn* is “driving camels to distant pastures.”

v. 17. *Rijâl* is here a plural of *râjil*, a foot soldier, not of *rajul*, a man.

v. 18. “Comrades stout,” *eysâru șidqin* : *eysâr* are companions gathered together for the arrow-gambling called *el-Meysir* ; this was played in the winter time, and by men sitting over the fire at night ; the call to heighten the blaze was in order that the fire might be more conspicuous to the night-wanderer seeking for a shelter.

## III.

Ja‘far son of ‘Olbeh, of the fight at Qurrâ Sahâbâl.

عَلَيْنَا الْوَلَيَا وَ الْعَدُو الْمُبَاسُلُ  
 صُدُور رَمَاحِ أَشْرِعَتْ أَوْسَلَاسُلُ  
 تَغَادَرْ صَرْعَى نُوَهَا مُتَخَالِفُ  
 كَمِ الْعَمَرْ بَاقِ وَ الْمَدَى مُتَطَاوِلُ  
 بِأَيْمَانِنَا بِيَضْ جَلَّتْهَا الصَّيَاقُلُ  
 وَلِيِّ مَنْهَا مَاضِتْ عَلَيْهِ الْفَاءِمُ

أَلَهْفَى بِقُرْيَ سَبَبَلِ حِينَ أَحْلَبَتْ  
 فَقَالُوا لَنَا شَدَّانِ لَأَبْدَ مِنْهُمَا  
 فَقَلَّنَا لَهُمْ تَلَكَّمْ إِذَا بَعْدَ كَرَّةِ  
 وَلَمْ نَدْرِانْ جِصْدَا مِنَ الْمَوْتِ جَيْضَةَ  
 إِذَا مَا ابْتَدَرَنَا مَازِقَا فَرَجَتْ لَنَا  
 لَهُمْ صَدْرُ سَيْفِي يَوْمَ بَطَّاءِ سَبَبَلِ

Alas for Qurrâ Sahâbâl ! the day that upon us drove  
 the crowd of frightened women, and the foemen pressed us sore.  
 They said to us—‘Two things lie before you : now must ye choose—  
 ‘the points of the spears couched at you, or, if ye will not, chains.’  
 We answered them—‘Yea, this thing may fall to you after fight,  
 ‘when men shall be left on ground and none shall arise again ;  
 ‘But we know not, if we quail before Death’s oncoming,  
 ‘how much may be left of life ; the goal is too far to see.’

5 When we strode to the strait of battle, there cleared us a space around  
 the white swords in our right hands which the smiths had fur-  
 bished fair ;  
 To them fell the edge of my blade on that day of Sahâbâl dale,  
 and mine was the share thereof wherever my fingers closed.

## NOTES.

The measure is the second form of the *Tawîl*.

This poem, if we may trust the account of the adventure to which it relates given in the Aghânî, has been manipulated by Abû Temmâm ; as given in the Hamâseh, it suggests an attack by the enemy on the tribe of the poet, a sudden surprise, with terrified women and few men to withstand a threatening foe ; but as the tale is told by el-Isfahânî (Agh. XI, 147), Ja‘far with two companions went forth to plunder the herds of ‘Oqeyl, and was beset on his way back by detached parties of that tribe in the valley of Sahâbâl, whom he overcame and reached home safe. Another version of the poem is given in the Aghânî which contains many more lines than that in the Hamâseh, and some notable differences in those which are common to both ; it is not necessary to give here the lines by which the Aghânî exceeds the Hamâseh : but the differences may be briefly stated. v. 1 is in the Aghânî—

عَشِيَّةَ قَرْنَيْ سَهْبَلِ اذْ تَعَطَّفَتْ عَلَيْنَا السَّرَايَا وَالْعَدُوُّ الْمَبَاسِلُ

This reading (which follows an introductory verse) avoids the difficulty caused by the word *alahfâ* ("alas") in the Hamâseh's version; the poem is one of exultation: why should it open with "Alas!"? It also, instead of *el-welâyâ*, "the weak and frightened women," gives *es-sarâyâ*, "the troops of horse," and instead of the difficult name *Qurrâ*, reads *qarney*, "the two horns" (that is, probably, the two mountain peaks between which the valley of *Sahâbal* lay). The verse may be rendered—

"That even when under *Sahâbal*'s twin peaks upon us drove

the horsemen troop after troop, and the foemen pressed us sore."

v. 2 is exactly the same in the Aghâni. So is v. 3, except that in the second hemistich for *na'u'hâ* the Aghâni reads *nahdu'hâ*, a word of the same meaning. v. 4 does not occur at all in the Aghâni's version. v. 5 is the same in both as to the second hemistich, but the first in the Aghâni is—

إِذَا مَا رُصِدْنَا مَرْصَدًا فَرَجَتْ لَذَا

"Their ambush beset our road, but there cleared us a space around  
the white swords in our right hands which the smiths had furbished fair."

v. 6 is the same in the Aghâni and the Hamâseh.

#### IV.

The same, in ward at Mekkeh.

هَوَىٰ مَعَ الرَّكْبِ الْيَمَانِيِّ مَصْعُدٌ  
عَجَبْتُ لِمُسْرَاهَا وَأَنِي تَخَلَّصَتْ  
الْمَتْ فَحَيَّتْ ثُمَّ قَامَتْ فَوَدَعَتْ  
فَلَا تَحْسِبِي أَنِي تَخَشَّعْتُ بَعْدَ كُمْ  
وَلَا أَنَّ نَفْسِي يَزْدَهِيَا وَعِيدَ كُمْ  
وَلِكِنْ عَرَتِي مِنْ هَوَاكِ صَبَابَةٌ

جَنِيبٌ وَجُنْدَمَازِيٌّ بِمِكَةَ مُوْتَقٌ  
إِلَيْ وَبَابُ السِّجْنِ دُونِيٌّ مَغْلُقٌ  
فَلَمَّا تَوَلَّتْ كَادَتْ النَّفْسُ تَزَهَّقُ  
لِشَاءٍ وَلَا أَنِي مِنَ الْمَوْتِ أَفْرَقُ  
وَلَا أَنِي بِالْمَشِيِّ فِي الْقَيْدِ أَخْرَقُ  
كَمَا كَذَّتْ الْقَيْ مِنْكِ اذْ أَنَّا مَطْلُقُ

My longing climbs up the steep with the riders of el-Yemen  
by their side, while my body lies in Mekkeh a prisoner.

I marvelled as she came darkling to me and entered free,  
while the prison's door before me was bolted and surely barred.

She drew near and greeted me: then she rose and bid farewell;  
and when she turned, my life wellnigh went forth with her.

Nay, think not that I am bowed by fear away from you,  
or that I tremble before the death that stands so nigh,

5 Or that my soul quakes at all before your threatenings,  
or that my spirit is broken by walking in these chains ;  
But a longing has smitten my heart born of my love of thee,  
as it was in the days aforetime when that I was free.

## NOTES.

The measure is the same as in Nos. II and III.

This piece is given with almost the same text in the Aghâni, XI, 149 ; the latter, however, begins it with the second verse of the Hamâseh's version, putting the verse which in it answers to the first last ; this is

وَأَمَّا الْهُوَى وَالْوَدُّ مِنِّي فَطَامِعٌ إِلَيْكِ وَجُنْهَادِي بِمَكَّةَ مُوْتَقٌ

My longing and my love stand gazing with straining eyes  
for thee, while my body lies in Mekkeh a prisoner.

The Aghâni also inserts a verse between vv. 4 and 5 of the Hamâseh's version ; this is, however, clearly intrusive, and breaks the sequence of the thought : it is therefore not quoted here.

## V.

‘Abd-el-Melik son of ‘Abd-er-Râhîm, of the Benu-d-Dayyân.

فَكُلْ رَدَاءِ يَرْتَدِيهِ جَمِيلُ  
فَلَيْسَ إِلَى حُسْنِ التَّنَاءِ سَبِيلُ  
فَقُلْتُ لَهَا إِنَّ الْكَرَامَ قَلِيلُ  
شَبَابُ تَسَامِي لِلْعُلَى وَ كَهْوُلُ  
عَزِيزٌ وَ جَارُ الْأَكْدَرِينَ ذَلِيلُ  
مُهْنِيفٌ يَوْدُ الْطَّرْفَ وَ هُوَ كَلِيلُ  
إِلَى النَّجْمِ فَرَعَ لَا يُذَالُ طَوِيلُ  
إِذَا مَا رَأَهُ عَامِرٌ وَ سَلْوُلُ  
وَ تَكْرَهُهُ آجَالِهِمْ وَ تَطُولُ  
وَ لَا طَلَّ مِنَّا حَيْثُ كَانَ قَدِيلُ  
وَ لَيْسَتْ عَلَى غَيْرِ الظَّبَابِ تَسِيلُ

إِذَا الْمَرُّ لَمْ يَدْنَسْ مِنَ اللَّوْمِ عَرْضَهُ  
وَ أَنْ هَوْلَمْ يَحْمِلُ عَلَى النَّفْسِ ضَيْمَهَا  
تَعِيْدَرْنَا أَنَا قَلِيلُ عَدِيدُدْنَا  
وَ مَا قَلَ مِنْ كَانَتْ بَقَائِيَهُ مِثْلَنَا  
وَ مَا فَرَنَا أَنَا قَلِيلُ وَ جَارَنَا  
لَنَا جَبَلٌ يَحْتَلُهُ مِنْ نَجِيْرَهُ  
رَسَا أَصْلَهُ تَحْتَ التَّرَى وَ سَمَا بِهِ  
وَ أَنَا لِقَوْمٍ مَا ذَرَى الْقُتْلَ سُبَّهُ  
يَقْرَبُ حُبُّ الْمَوْتِ آجَالَنَا لَنَا  
وَ مَا مَاتَ مِنَّا سَيْدٌ حَتَّفَ أَنْفَهُ  
تَسِيلُ عَلَى حِدِّ الظَّبَابِ نَفْوُسُنَا

صَفَوْنَا وَلَمْ نَكُونْ دَأْخِلَصَ سِرْنَا  
 عَلَوْنَا إِلَى خَيْرِ الظَّهُورِ وَ حَطَنَا  
 فَنَحْنُ كَمَا مِنْ مَا فِي نِصَابِنَا  
 وَ نُذَكِّرُ أَنْ شَدَّنَا عَلَى النَّاسِ قَوْلَهُمْ  
 إِذَا سَيَّدَ مَنَا خَلَّ قَامَ سَيِّدٌ  
 وَ مَا أَخْمَدَتْ نَارُ لَنَا دُونَ طَارِقٍ  
 وَ أَيَامَنَا مَمْشُورَةٌ فِي عَدُونَا  
 وَ أَسْيَافِنَا فِي كُلِّ غَرْبٍ وَ مَشْرِقٍ  
 مُعْوَدَةٌ أَلَا تَسْلَ نِصَانُهَا  
 سَلَى أَنْ جَهَلْتَ النَّاسَ عَذَّا وَ عَنْهُمْ  
 فَإِنَّ بَذِي الدَّيَانِ قُطْبٌ لِقَوْمِهِمْ

أَفَأَنْ أَطَابَتْ حَمْلَنَا وَ فُحُولُ  
 لِوَقْتٍ إِلَى خَيْرِ الْبُطُونِ نَزُولُ  
 كَهَامٌ وَ لَا فِيَنَا يَعْدُ بَخِيلُ  
 وَ لَا يُذَكِّرُونَ الْقَوْلَ حِينَ نُقُولُ  
 قَوْلُ لِمَا قَالَ الْكَرَامُ فَعَوْلُ  
 وَ لَا نَمَدَا فِي النَّازِلِينَ ذَرِيلُ  
 لَهَا غَرَرٌ مَعْلُوْمَةٌ وَ حُجُولُ  
 بِهَا مِنْ قِرَاعِ الدَّارِعِينَ فَلُولُ  
 فَتَغْمَدَ حَتَّى يُسْتَبَاحَ قَبِيلُ  
 وَ لَيْسَ سَوَاءُ عَالَمٌ وَ جَهُولُ  
 تَدُورُ رَحَاهُمْ حَوْلَهُمْ وَ تَجُولُ

When a man stains not his honour by doing a deed of shame,  
 whatso be the raiment he wears, fair is it and comely ;  
 And if he takes not on his soul the burden of loss and toil,  
 there lies not before him any road to praise and glory.

She cast blame on us that our number was little to count and few :

I answered her—‘Yea : the count of noble men is little.

‘But not few canst thou call those whose remnants are like to us  
 —young men who vie with the old in the quest of glory.

5 ‘It hurts us nought that we be few, when our friend by us  
 ‘is safe, though the friends of most men beside be trampled ;

‘A mountain we have where dwells he whom we shelter there,  
 ‘lofty, before whose height the eye falls back blunted :  
 ‘Deep-based is its root below ground, and overhead there soars  
 ‘its peak to the stars of heaven whereto no man reaches.

‘A folk are we who deem it no shame to be slain in fight,  
 ‘though that be the deeming thereof of Salûl and ‘Âmir ;  
 ‘Our love of death brings near to us our days of doom,  
 ‘but their dooms shrink from death and stand far distant.

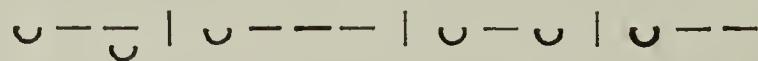
10 'There dies among us no lord a quiet death in his bed,  
   ' and never is blood of us poured forth without vengeance.  
   ' Our souls stream forth in a flood from the edge of the whetted swords :  
     ' no otherwise than so does our spirit leave its mansion.  
   ' Pure is our stock, unsullied : fair is it kept and bright  
     ' by mothers whose bed bears well, and fathers mighty.  
   ' To the best of the uplands we wend, and when the season comes,  
     ' we travel adown to the best of fruitful valleys.  
   ' Like rain of the heaven are we : there is not in all our line  
     ' one blunt of heart, nor among us is counted a niggard.

15 'We say nay whenso we will to the words of other men,  
   ' but no man to us says nay when we give sentence.  
   ' When passes a lord of our line, in his stead there rises straight  
     ' a lord to say the say and do the deeds of the noble.  
   ' Our beacon is never quenched to the wanderer of the night,  
     ' nor has ever a guest blamed us where men meet together.  
   ' Our Days are famous among our foemen, of fair report,  
     ' branded and blazed with glory like noble horses.  
   ' Our swords have swept throughout all lands both West and East  
     ' and gathered many a notch from the steel of hauberk-wearers ;

20 'Not used are they when drawn to be laid back in their sheaths  
   ' before that the folk they meet are spoiled and scattered.  
   ' If thou knowest not, ask men what they think of us and them  
     ' —not alike are he that knows and he that knows not.  
   ' The children of ed-Dayyân are the shaft of their people's mill  
     ' —around them it turns and whirls, while they stand midmost.'

## NOTES.

The metre is the third form of the *Tawîl*: the first hemistich is the same as in Nos. II, III and IV; but the second is catalectic and is scanned thus :—



This poem stands in the *Hamâseh* under the name of es-Semau'al son of 'Âdiyâ the Jew, but it is not by him; this is proved by the mention of 'Âmir and Salûl in verse 8, and of the Benu-d-Dayyân in v. 22. The mistake by which it has been attributed to es-Semau'al arose, as pointed out by et-Tebrîzî against the passage, from v. 6, where the mountain spoken of, which is really a metaphor for the glory and renown of the tribe, has been thought to be the burg el-Abraq in Teymâ, where es-Semau'al dwelt, and where he sheltered the kin of Imra'el-Qeys the poet against el-Hârith son of Abû Shemir king of Ghassân.

Of the real author nothing is known except that he belonged to the noble stock of ed-Dayyân: his name recurs in the *Hamâseh* at p. 400 as the author of a *marthiyeh*,

and he is there called a native of Syria (*Sha'âmi*) and a metaphysician (*Kelâmi*) ; I have found no mention of him in the Aghâni, Ibn Khallikân, Ibn Quteybeh, or Hâjî Khalîfeh. It seems to me most probable that the piece belongs to the early wars of the Arabs during the spread of el-Islâm over Asia Minor, Armenia and Persia, and I should doubt its being the composition of a mere scholar. The fact that it was attributed to es-Semau'âl shows that its authorship is uncertain, and that it cannot be set down to any other with confidence.

v. 5. "Our friend," *jâr* : this word is used for either (but most frequently for the weaker) of the two parties to a covenant of mutual protection (*jiwâr*) ; it is etymologically identical with the Hebrew *gér* (A. V. "stranger"), and the latter word frequently bears the same meaning : *e. g.* in Job xxxi. 32, where the LXX rightly render it by *ξένος*, which has the same double sense of host and guest, protector and protected.

v. 6. The mountain here referred to is the glory and great name of the tribe ; the same metaphor occurs in a noble passage of the mo'allaqah of el-Hârith son of Hilâzeh (vv. 23—26.)

فَدَقَيْدَنَا عَلَى الشَّنَاءَةِ تَدْمِي—نَا حُصُونَ وَعِزَّةٌ قَعْسَاءُ  
قَبْلَ مَا إِلَيْ—وَمَ بِيَضْتَ بِعِدِّيُونَ ال—نَّاسُ فِيهِ— تَغْيِظُ وَابْدَأُ  
فَكَلَّ الْمَذْوَنَ وَ تَرْدِي بِذَارَ عَنْ جَوْنَا يَنْجَابُ عَنْهُ الْعَمَادُ  
مُكْفِرًا عَلَى الْحَوَادِثِ لَا تَرْ تُوْهُ لِلَّهِ—رِ مُؤْبِدُ صَهَاءُ

And we have stood, spite of their hate, and high towers  
and firm-based glory lift us aloft ;  
Before to-day has it blinded the eyes  
of men in which were wrath and denial.  
As though the Fates beating against us met  
a black mountain cleaving the topmost clouds,  
Mighty and strong above the changes of things,  
which no shock of the Days can soften or shake.

v. 8. Salûl was a brother tribe of 'Âmir son of Sa'sâ'ah : both were engaged in frequent contests and rivalries with the Benu-l-Hârith ibn Ka'b, and especially with the house of ed-Dayyâن ; see, for instance, Aghâni X, 145, where a story is told of a contest at 'Okâd between Yezîd son of 'Abd-el-Madân and 'Âmir son of Tufeyl for the hand of the daughter of Umayyeh son of el-Askar el-Kinânî, in which the former was victorious : also another (pp. 146-7) between the same Yezîd and the men of 'Âmir before one of the Ghassanide Kings. One of the battles between the Benu-l-Hârith and the Benû 'Âmir was the Day of es-Selef (Agh. X, 150) : another was the Day of Feyf-er-Rîh (Ibn-el-Athîr, I, 474.)

v. 14. "Rain of the heaven", *mâ'u-l-muzni* : literally, "water of a white rain-cloud" : the sense is that they are as liberal as rain. *Mâ-es-Semâ*, "Water of the heaven," was a name given among the Arabs to men for their bounty and women for

their beauty. “One blunt of heart,” *kahâm*: the opposite of *mâdi*, cutting, keen, going straight to his end.

v. 18. “Days,” *Ayyâm*, is the word used in Arab legend for battles: one says—“the Day of el-Kulâb,” “the Day of Shi'b Jebeleh,” &c., although the fight may (as it did at el-Kulâb) have lasted longer than one day. The second hemistich cannot be literally rendered into English. *Lahâ ghurarun ma'lûmatun wa hujûl* means “They (*i. e.* our days) have wellknown *ghurar* and *hujûl*.” *Ghurar* is the plural of *ghurrah*, a white blaze on the forehead of a horse; and *hujûl* is the plural of *hijl*, the original meaning of which is an anklet: then, of a horse, a white ring on the leg in the place of an anklet; as horses bearing such marks are conspicuous among a troop, so are the Days of his tribe glorious among days. So says ‘Amr son of Kulthûm, using the same metaphor (Mo‘all. 25.)—

وَ أَيَّامٌ لَنَا غُرْرٌ طِوَالٌ عَصَيْنَا الْمَلَكَ فِيهَا أَنْ زَدِينَا

“Many the Days are ours, long, blazed with glory,  
when we withheld the King and would not serve him.”

## VI.

Beshâmeh son of Hazn of Nahshal.

وَ أَنْ سَهِيَّتِ كِرَامَ النَّاسِ فَاسْقَيْنَا  
يَوْمًا سَرَّاً كِرَامَ النَّاسِ فَادْعَيْنَا  
عَذْهُ وَ لَا هُوَ بِالْأَبْذَنَاءِ يَشْرِيَّنَا  
تَلَقَ السَّوَابِقَ مِنْنَا وَ الْمُصْلِيَّنَا  
الَّا افْتَلَيْنَا غُلَامًا سَيِّدًا فِينَا  
وَ لَوْ نُسَامُ بِهَا فِي الْأَمْنِ اغْلِيَّنَا  
نَاسُو بِأَمْوَالِنَا آثَارَ أَيْدِينَا  
قِيلُ الْكِمَاهُ أَلَا أَيْنَ الْمَحَامُونَا  
مِنْ فَارِسٍ خَالِهِمْ إِيَاهُ يَعْنُونَا  
حَدَ الظَّبَاهَةَ وَ صَلَنَاهَا بِأَيْدِينَا  
مَعَ الْبُكَاهَ عَلَى مَنْ هَمَتْ يَبْكُونَا  
عَنَا الْحِفَاظُ وَ أَسْيَافُ تُوَاتِينَا

إِذَا مُحَيِّوْكِ يَا سَلَمِي فَحَيَّنَا  
وَ أَنْ دَعَوْتِ إِلَى جُلُّي وَ مَكْرَمَةٌ  
إِنَّا بَذِي نَهَشَّلَ لَا زَدَعِي لَأَبِ  
إِنْ تُبَتَّدِرْ غَایَةٌ يَوْمًا لَمَكْرَمَةٌ  
وَ لَيْسَ يَهْلُكُ مِنْنَا سَيِّدُ أَبَدَا  
إِنَّا لَدُرْخِصُ يَوْمَ الرُّوعِ أَنْفَسَنَا  
بِيَضُ مَفَارِقُنَا تَغْلِي مَرَاجِلُنَا  
إِنِّي لَمِنْ مَعْشَرِ أَفْدَى أَوَادِلَهُمْ  
لَوْ كَانَ فِي الْأَلْفِ مِنْنَا وَاحِدٌ فَدَعَوْا  
إِذَا الْكِمَاهُ تَذَهَّبَا أَنْ يُصِيبُهُمْ  
وَ لَا تَرَاهُمْ وَ أَنْ جَلَّتْ مُصِيبَتَهُمْ  
وَ نَرَكَبُ الْكُرَّةَ أَحْيَانًا فَيَفْرَجُهُ

We give thee greeting, O Selmā : do thou give us greeting back !

and if thou givest the cup to the noblest, reach it to us.

And if thou callest one day to a mighty and valiant deed

the chiefest of noble men, let thy call go forth to us.

Sons of Nahshal are we : no father we claim but him,

nor would he sell us for any other sons.

When a goal of glory is set and the runners rush forth thereto,

of us shalt thou see in the race the foremost and the next.

5 And never there comes to die a mighty man of our line

but we wean among us a boy to be mighty in his stead.

Cheap do we hold our lives when the day of dread befalls,

but if we should set them for sale in peace, they would cost men  
[dear.]

White are our foreheads and worn : for ever our cauldrons boil :

we heal with our rich store the wounds our hands have made.

I come of a house whose elders have fallen one by one

as they sprang to the cry of the fighters—‘ Where are the helpers  
[now ?]

If there should be among a thousand but one of us,

and men should call—‘ Ho ! a knight !’ he would think that they  
[meant him.]

10 When the fighters blench and quail before the deadly stroke

of the sword-edge, we leap forth and catch it in our hands.

Never shalt thou see them, though their loss be great and sore,

weeping among the weepers over him that is dead !

Many a time we bestride the steed of peril and death,

but our valour bears us back safe, and the swords that help us well.

#### NOTES.

The metre of this piece is the same as that of No. I.

The tribe of Nahshal was a sept of Temîm, of the division of Dârim. This poem is also attributed to a poet (some say the elder Muraqqish, but most mention no name) of the Benû Qeys ibn Thâ'lebeh, a sub-tribe of Bekr ibn Wâ'il : those who follow this theory read in v. 3, instead of *innâ benî Nahshalin*, *innâ benî Mâlikin*, Mâlik of Qeys, the head of the family to which Tarafeh the poet belonged, being meant.

v. 4. The usual number of horses run in a race among the pagan Arabs was ten ; the one that came in first was called *es-sâbiq*, “the out-stripper,” or *el-mujelli*, “he who makes [his owner] conspicuous”: the second, *el-muṣalli*, “he whose head is at the tail (*salâ*) of the foremost”: the third, *el-muselli*, “he who renders [his owner] content”: the fourth, *et-tâli*, “the follower”: the fifth, *el-murtâh*, “the agile”: the sixth, *el-‘âṭif*, “he who bends his neck”: the seventh, *el-mu’ammal*, “he from whom much had been hoped”: the eighth *el-hâḍiy* “the fortunate” (apparently by an euphemism): the ninth, *el-laṭîm*, “the euffed,” because he is driven away with blows from the paddock ; and the tenth, *es-sukeyt*, “the silent,” because he is covered with confusion.

“The race for glory” is a metaphor often used by the old poets: thus Zuheyîr (Ahlwardt, Dîwâns, p. 80) says—

إِذَا ابْتَدَرَتْ قَيْسُ أَبْنُ عَيْلَانَ غَایَةً  
مِنَ الْمَجْدِ مِنْ يَسْبِقُ إِلَيْهَا يَسْعُونَ

“When the men of Qeys son of ‘Eylân race together for a goal  
of glory, he that reaches it first is their chosen Lord.”

v. 7. “White are our foreheads,” *bîdun mafâriqunâ*: this is variously interpreted; it is said that it may either mean that their heads are crowned with glory as with light, or that they have become bald by constantly wearing the helmet: the latter explanation seems best. The boiling of the cauldrons is also explained in two ways; it is said that it is a metaphor for the heat and fury of war: but the better and simpler interpretation refers it to their ever open hospitality. “We heal with our rich store”: that is, “when any one is slain by us we pay from our herds the price of his blood.”

v. 9. This resembles a line of Taraféh’s (Mo‘all. 42)—

إِذَا الْقَوْمُ قَالُوا مَنْ فَدَى خَلَتْ أَنْدَى  
عُذِيْتُ فَلَمْ أَكُسَّلْ وَلَمْ أَتَبْلَى

“When my kinsmen cried ‘Who is the man for the deed?’ I deemed that I  
was he they meant: and I lagged not nor was I infirm of heart.”

## VII.

لَقَتَدِيلًا دَمَهُ مَا يَطْلُ  
أَذَا بِالْعِبَرِ لَهُ مُسْتَقْلُ  
مَصْعَ عَقْدَتِهِ مَا تَكَلُ  
رَقَ أَفْعَى يَنْفَثُ السَّمَ صَلُ  
جَلَ حَتَّى دَقَ فِيهِ الْأَجَلُ  
بَأْبَى جَارَةَ مَا يَدْلُ  
ذَكَتِ الشَّعْرِيِّ فَبَرَدَ وَظَلَّ  
وَنَدَى الْكَفِينَ شَهْمَ مُدَلُّ  
حَلَّ حَلَّ الْحَزْمَ حَيْثُ يَحْلُّ  
وَإِذَا يَسْتَطُو فَلَيْتُ أَبْلُ  
وَإِذَا يَغْزُو فَسِعَ أَزْلُ

إِنَّ بِالشَّعْبِ الَّذِي دُونَ سَلْعَ  
خَلَفَ الْعِبَرَ عَلَى دَوَلَى  
وَدَرَأَ الشَّارِمَدَى أَبْنَ أَخْتَ  
مُطْرَقَ يَرْشَحُ سَمَّا كَمَا أَطَّ  
خَبَرَ مَا فَابَنَا مُصْمَدَلُ  
بَزَّيِ الدَّهْرُ وَكَانَ غَشْوَمَّا  
شَامِسُ فِي الْقَرْحَدَى إِذَا مَا  
يَابِسُ الْجَذَبِينَ مِنْ غَيْرِ بُوسِ  
ظَاعَنْ بِالْحَزْمِ حَتَّى إِذَا مَا  
غَيَّتْ مُزَنْ غَامِرَ حَيْثُ يَجْدِي  
مُسْبِلُ فِي الْحَيِّ أَحْوَى رِفَلُ

وَلَهُ طَعْمَانٌ أَرَى وَ شَرِي  
يُرَكِبُ الْهَوْلَ وَحِيدًا وَ لَا يَصْ  
وَفَتُو هَجَرَدَا قَمَ اسْرَوا  
كُلُّ مَاضٍ قَدْ تَرَدَّى بِمَاضٍ  
فَاحْتَسَوا أَنفَاسَ ذُومٍ فَلَمَّا  
فَادَرَكَنَا الدَّارَ مِنْهُمْ وَ لَمَّا  
فَلَدَنْ فَلَتْ هَدَيْلَ شَبَّاهَ  
وَبِمَا أَبْرَكَهَا فِي مُنَاخٍ  
وَبِمَا صَبَّحَهَا فِي ذَرَاهَا  
صَلَيَّتْ مِنْيٍ هَدَيْلَ بِخَرْقٍ  
يَذْهَلُ الصَّعَدَةَ حَتَّى إِذَا مَا  
حَلَّتِ الْخَمْرُ وَ كَانَتْ حَرَامًا  
فَاسْقَدَنِيهَا يَا سَوَادَ بْنَ عَمْرَو  
فَسَقَيَّدَنَا كَاسَ حَتْفَ هَدَيْلَ  
تَضَحَّكُ الصَّبَعُ لِقَتْلِي هَدَيْلَ  
وَ عِتَاقُ الطَّيْرِ تَهْفُو بِطَافَانًا

وَ كَلَّا الطَّعْمَيْنِ قَدْ دَأَقَ كُلُّ  
جَبَهَ إِلَّا الْيَمَانِيِّ الْأَفَلُ  
لَيْلَهُمْ حَتَّى إِذَا اِنْجَابَ حَلَّوَا  
كَسَنَا الْبَرَقِ إِذَا مَا يُسَلِّ  
هُوَمُوا رَعْدُهُمْ فَأَشْهَمُوا  
يَذْجَجُ مِلْ خَيْرِيْنِ إِلَّا الْأَقْلُ  
لَبَمَا كَانَ هَدَيْلًا يَغْلِ  
جَعْجَعَ يَذْقُبُ فِيهِ الْأَظَلُّ  
مِنْهُ بَعْدَ الْقَتْلِ ذَهَبَ وَ شَلَّ  
لَا يَمْلِ الشَّرَ حَتَّى يَمْلَوَا  
ذَهَلَتْ كَانَ لَهَا مِنْهُ عَلَّ  
وَ بَلَى مَا أَلْمَتْ تَحْلُّ  
إِنَّ جَسْمِي بَعْدَ خَالِي لَخَلُّ  
غَدَهَا خَرَّيْ وَ عَارَ وَ ذَلُّ  
وَ تَرَى الذُّبَّ لَهَا يَسْتَهْلِ  
تَتَخَطَّاهُمْ فَمَا تَسْتَقِلُّ

In the cleft of the rocks below Sal' is lying  
one slain whose blood drips not without vengeance.  
He left the burden to me and departed,  
and I take up the load lightly and bear it—  
A heritage of bloodshed to me the son of  
his sister, one dauntless—his knot none looses,  
Downcast of eyes, dripping poison, like as  
the hooded asp that spits venom, the adder.

5 Fearful the tidings that reach us, heavy—  
the heaviest of burdens thereby is nothing !  
Fate has cut off from me, Fate the tyrant,  
one mighty whose friend none dared to be little :  
A sunshine in wintertide, until when  
the Dogstar burned, he was coolness and shadow :  
Lean-sided and thin, but not from lacking :  
liberal-handed, keen-hearted, haughty ;  
He journeyed with Wariness, and where he halted,  
there Wariness halted herself his comrade :  
10 A rushing rain-flood when he gave guerdons :  
when he sprang to the onset, a mighty lion ;  
In the midst of his kin flowed his long black hair, and  
his skirts trailed : in war a wolf's whelp with lean flanks ;  
Two savours had he, of honey and gall : and  
one or the other all men have tasted ;  
He rode Fear alone without a fellow  
but only his deep-notched blade of el-Yemen.  
Many the warriors, noon-journeying, who, when  
night fell, journeyed on, and halted at dawning—  
15 Keen each one of them, girt with a keen blade  
that when one drew it flashed forth like the lightning—  
They were tasting of sleep by sips, when as  
they nodded, thou didst fright them, and they were scat-  
Vengeance we did on them : there escaped us [tered !  
of the two houses none but the fewest.  
And if Huðeyl broke the edge of his sword-blade—  
many the notch that Huðeyl gained from him !  
Many the time that he made them kneel down on  
jagged rocks where the hoof is worn with running :  
20 Many the morning he fell on their shelter,  
and after slaughter came plunder and spoiling.  
Huðeyl has been burned by me, one valiant  
whom Evil tires not though they be wearied—  
Whose spear drinks deep the first draught, and thereon  
drinks deep again of the blood of foemen.  
Forbidden was wine, but now is it lawful :  
hard was the toil that made it lawful !  
Reach me the cup, O Sawâd son of 'Amru :  
my body is spent with gaining my vengeance.  
25 To Huðeyl we gave to drink Death's goblet,  
whose dregs are disgrace and shame and dishonour,

The hyena laughs over the slain of Huðeyl, and  
 the wolf—see thou—grins by their corpses,  
 And the vultures flap their wings, full-bellied  
 treading their dead, too gorged to leave them.

## NOTES.

The measure is the *Medîd*, the basis of which is a pair of ionics *a minore* separated by an anapæst :—

— — — | — — — | — — — — || — — — — | — — — | — — — —

This poem stands in the Hamâseh under the name of Ta'abbâta Sherrâ; but it is also attributed to Ta'abbâta's sister's son, and held to refer to the vengeance wrought by the nephew on his uncle's slayers. The commentators, however, say that the slain man cannot be Ta'abbâta himself, for Sal', the place named in the first verse, is in the neighbourhood of el-Medîneh: but the place where Ta'abbâta was slain lay in the country of Huðeyl, eastward of Mekkeh, and was called Rakhmân. His sister said, bewailing him—

نعم الفتى غادرتم ب Roxman  
 بثابت ابن جابر ابن سفيان  
 من يقتل القرن ويروي الذمان

“Fair was the warrior whom ye left in Rakhmân  
 —Thâbit son of Jâbir son of Sufyân,  
 Who slew his foe and poured wine for his fellow!”

(Thâbit son of Jâbir was the real name of Ta'abbâta Sherrâ, which means “He carried evil under his arm.”)

But the weight of evidence is against the authenticity of the poem as an utterance of Ta'abbâta's; it is more probably attributed to the famous imitator of the songs of the pagan Arabs, Abû Mohâriz ibn Hayyân, commonly known as Khalaf el-Ahmar. This man was a native of Farghâna, and was taken captive with his parents when Khurâsân was conquered by the Muslims; he grew up to be a most eminent man of learning, and among all those of that class, who abounded in the days of the first 'Abbâsî Khalîfehs, he was the truest poet. He is best known as a fabricator of poems in the style of the ancients, with which he deceived the learned men of el-Kûfeh, and even Hammâd er-Râwiyyeh himself; he afterwards acknowledged the poems to be forged, but they refused to believe it. He died about A. H. 180. (Ibn Quteybeh, Ma'ârif, p. 270. Id. in Nöldeke's Beiträge zur Kenntniss d. Poes. d. alt. Arab. p. 15. Ibn Khallikân, I. p. 571, and III. p. 391. Aghânî V. 174.)

The following are some of the marks of a late origin (*âthâr et-taulid*) which are to be found in the piece :—

The subtlety of the thought conveyed in the words of verse 5, *b*, — *jella hattâ daqqa fihi-l-ajellu*: this struck the ancient commentators as unlike the speech of a Desert Arab :

The play of words in verse 8 between *yâbisu-l-jembeyni* (dry-sided, *i. e.* lean) and *nedi-l-keffeyni*, (moist-handed, *i. e.* liberal) :

The alliteration in v. 9, where out of ten words seven contain the letter **ت**:

The alliteration of *gheythu* and *ghāmirun* in v. 10, and the rhyming antithesis of *gheyth* and *leyth* (besides *heyth* in the same verse):

The very unusual *distributive* sense of *kilā* in v. 12:

The use of *injāba* in v. 14 for the dawn: it appears to be used in classical Arabic only for the clearing away of clouds;

The play on the word *mādin* in v. 15, where it means (1) a warrior who goes straight to his end, and (2) a sword that cuts through all obstacles.

None of these taken by itself would perhaps be conclusive; alliteration is not unknown in the ancient poetry, but it is not approved; and instances of word-play might also be found. But taken together they constitute what is called *tekelluf* (which may be rendered *artificiality*), which is foreign to the age to which the poem would belong if it were really by Ta'abbata Sherrā.

But whether an imitation or a genuine old poem, there can be no doubt that the piece breathes the true spirit of the pagan Arab. Albert Schultens says of it—"Nobile hoc carmen . . . . monumentum est illustre laudationum quibus Fortium fortia facta conclebrari solebant. Magnis splendet ornamentiis ac luminibus, quae gentis genium graphicē pingunt." Goethe, in the Appendix to his West-Oestlicher Diwan (where he gives a translation of it, rendered from Schultens' Latin, as the only specimen of old Arab poetry which he adduces), writes—"Die Grösse des Charaeters, der Ernst, die rechtmässige Grausamkeit des Handelns, sind hier eigentlich das Mark der Poesie . . . . Höchst merkwürdig erscheint uns bei diesem Gedicht, dass die reine Prosa der Handlung durch Transposition der einzelnen Ereignisse poetisch wird. Dadurch, und dass das Gedicht fast alles äussern Schmucks ermangelt, wird der Ernst desselben erhöht, und wer sich recht hinein lies't muss das Gesehehene, von Anfang bis zu Ende, nach und nach vor der Einbildungskraft aufgebaut erblicken."

vv. 1 to 4 tell of the slaying, and set before us the avenger: vv. 5 to 13 praise the slain man, his mighty deeds and great heart: vv. 14 to 17 describe the onslaught which led in the end to his fall: vv. 18 to 20, the many deeds of daring which Huðeyl had to avenge on him; vv. 21 to 27, the vengeance taken by him into whose mouth the poem is put.

---

v. 1. "Drips not without vengeance," *mā yuṭallu*: literally, "is not poured forth like the dew or fine rain."

v. 3. "A heritage of bloodshed to me the son of his sister", *wa warā'a-th-thā'ri minni-bnu ukhtin*: literally, "and behind the vengeance" (i. e., to take it up)—a continuation of the thought of verse 2) [there is] "a sister's son in me." This verse has been misunderstood by Schultens and Rückert: the former renders it—"Post me talioni imminet sororis filius," and the latter—"Und ein Schwestersohn zur Raehe tritt mir naeh." Goethe, seeing with a fine discernment that the avenger who speaks is *himself* the sister's son of the dead, (compare verse 24—*inna jismī bā'da Khālī lakhallu*), makes verses 3 and 4 the reported utterance of the dying man—

"Erbe meiner Rache  
Ist der Schwestersohn,  
Der Streitbare,  
Der Unversöhnliche," u. s. w.

*Minni* is here an example of the explicative *min* (*li-l-bayān*).

"His knot none loosens," "*oqdatuhu lā toħallu*, said of a man whose fury in battle is

irresistible: the dictionaries give *tahallelet* 'oqaduhu as meaning "his anger was appeased."

v. 4. The comparison of the warrior to a deadly serpent in this verse recalls the name of the family in Tegħlib to which 'Amr son of Kulthûm belonged—the *Arâqim*—"the spotted serpents."

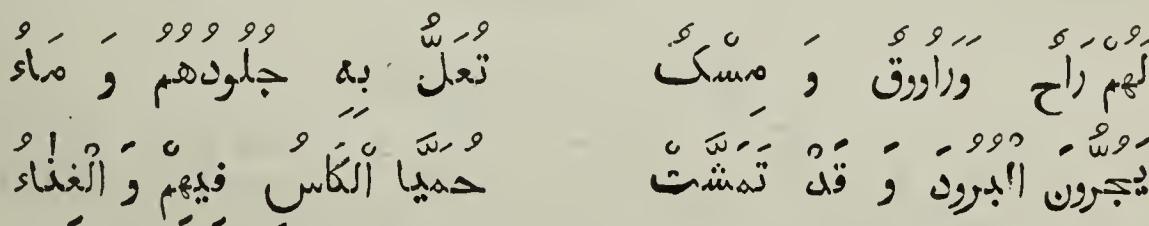
v. 5. "The heaviest of burdens thereby is nothing": literally—"it is great (*i. e.* terrible) so that the greatest therein becomes little"; the criticism of the earlier commentators on this phrase has been mentioned above.

v. 6. "Whose friend," *jâruhu*: see the note to v. 5 of No. V.

v. 7. "A sunshine," *shâmis*: literally, "a sunny day."

v. 8. "Lean-sided": leanness is a subject of praise in a hero because it denotes the hardships he has undergone, and also his generosity in giving to others to eat while he keeps nought for himself.

v. 11. The first hemistich of this verse can be taken in two ways: either *musbilun* may be rendered absolutely, "letting hang down," *i. e.*, his garments: and *ahwâ* may be taken of his complexion, "swarthy"; or, as I have rendered it, *ahwâ* may be the accusative after *musbilun*, "letting hang down his long black [hair]." "His skirts trailed": in days of peace and quiet the Arabs allowed their *izâr* or waist-wrapper to trail on the ground: in war they girt it tight about their loins. Zuheyr says, describing a luxurious people (Ahlwardt, Six Poets, p. 77) :—



"By them is wine, and a strainer, and musk thereby  
wherewith their skins are perfumed, and water:  
They trail their skirts of *burd*, and in them glows  
the vehemence of the cup and the ecstasy of song."

(Water, to mix with the wine: so wine was commonly drunk by the Arabs: see Tarafeh, Mo'all. 59, and 'Amr Kulth. Mo'all. 2).

"A wolf's whelp," *sim*, a hybrid between the wolf and the hyena, with the fierceness of both.

v. 12. "Gall", *sharyun*, the colocynth or bitter gourd.

v. 14. The mode of journeying in the Desert here described will be familiar to all readers of Palgrave's "Central and Eastern Arabia."

vv. 16, 17. In et-Tebrîzî's edition of the Hamâseh these verses stand in the reverse order: the sequence in which I have given them is that in which they are placed by Schultens, and seems the natural one.

"They were tasting of sleep by sips," *ihtasau anfâsa naumin*: *i. e.*, sleep was overcoming them little by little.

v. 18. "Broke the edge of his sword blade," *fellet shebâhu*: that is, apparently, overthrew him.

v. 21. "Huðeyl has been burned," *saliyet*, *i. e.*, scathed. So el-Hârith son of 'Obâd, when he was unwillingly compelled to take part in the contest by the slaying of his son Bujeyr by Muħelhil, said of the War of Basûs—

لَمْ أَكُنْ مِنْ جَنَاتِهَا عَلِمَ اللَّهُ وَإِذِي بِحَرَّهَا الْيَوْمَ صَالِ

“I was not of those whose wrong wrought it, God knows !

Yet to-day must I be burned in its blaze.”

v. 22. “He drank deep at the first draught” (*nehila*) and “he drank deep a second draught” (*alla*), both words used originally of camels, are in constant use in Arab poetry to describe the thrust and thrust again of spears.

v. 23. Wine was forbidden to him, because he had sworn not to drink it until he attained to his vengeance.

v. 25. This verse is omitted in Freytag’s edn. of et-Tebrîzî’s *Hamâseh*: I have restored it from Schultens’ text, because it appears to arise naturally out of the idea of the preceding verse.

v. 27. “The vultures,” *itâqu-t-teyri*: literally, “the noble of birds,” a term reserved for birds of prey. “Flap their wings,” *tahfâ*: this is the reading of Schultens, and is also given by et-Tebrîzî in the commentary, though he admits *teghdâ* into the text; the former reading seems to me to give much greater vividness to the horrible picture than the latter, which is a mere auxiliary verb.

### VIII.

Ishâq son of Khalaf.

لَوْلَا أُمَيْمَةً لَمْ أَجْزَعْ مِنَ الْعَدَمِ وَلَمْ أَقْاسِ الدَّجَى فِي حِنْدِسِ الظُّلْمِ  
وَزَادَنِي رَغْبَةً فِي الْعِيشِ مَعْرُوفَتِي ذُلَّ الْيَتِيمَةَ يَجْفُوهَا ذَرْوَ الرَّحْمِ  
أَحَادِرُ الْفَقْرِ يَوْمًا أَنْ يُلْمِمَ بِهِ فِي هُونَكَ السِّرَّ عَنْ الْحَمْ عَلَى وَضْمِ  
تَهْوِي حَيَّاتِي وَأَهْوِي مَوْتَهَا شَفَقًا وَالْمَوْتُ أَكْرَمُ نَزَالٍ عَلَى الْحَرَمِ  
أَخْشَى فَظَاظَةً عَمِّ أَوْ جَفَاءَ أَخِي وَكَذْتُ أُبِقَى عَلَيْهَا مِنْ أَذْنِي الْكَلْمِ

If no Umeymeh were there, no Want would trouble my soul—

no labour call me to toil for bread through pitchiest night;

What moves my longing to live is but that well do I know

how low the fatherless lies,—how hard the kindness of kin.

I quake before loss of wealth lest lacking fall upon her,

and leave her shieldless and bare as flesh set forth on a board.

My life she prays for, and I from mere love pray for her death—

yea, death, the gentlest and kindest guest to visit a maid.

5 I fear an uncle’s rebuke, a brother’s harshness for her ;  
my chiefest end was to spare her heart the grief of a word.

## NOTES.

The metre is the first form of the *besît*, in which the last foot is the same in the second hemistich as in the first; an attempt has been made to imitate it in the translation. The grammars give  $\text{˘} - \text{˘} -$  as permissible for the third foot, although on an examination of a large number of pieces of this measure in the Hamâseh I have found no example of a short first syllable; instances, however, occur elsewhere; see en-Nâbighah, v. 34 and 49, and xi. 3. Zuheyr, ix. 18, 21, 22. In the English, owing to the want of clear distinction between syllables long in themselves (apart from the accent) and short, it has not been found possible always to give a long syllable in this place.

Of the author of these lines I have been able to ascertain nothing. The fragment is, as shown by the rhyme in the first hemistich, the beginning of a *qaṣîdeh*; four more lines of the same measure and rhyme are given as a continuation of the piece in the Appendix to the Calcutta Edn. of the Hamâseh, p. 221: but they are of inferior merit to those selected by Abû Temmâm. By his name (Ishâq) the author should be an Islâmî; the only authentic instance of a biblical name born by an Arab (not a Jew) before cl-Islâm is that of the great-great-grandfather of 'Adî son of Zeyd el-Tbâdî, who was called Ayyûb (Job). (See Aghânî ii. 18, and Abu-l-'Alâ, quoted in the Hamâseh, p. 177). The sentiment of v. 4 is, however, rather pagan than Islamic.

v. 3. "Meat on a butcher's board" is a proverbial expression for that which is utterly defenceless and helpless.

v. 4. The scholiast compares the proverbs (both current in the Ignorance) *ni'ma-l-khatanu-l-qabru*, "An excellent son-in-law is the Grave," and *defnu-l-benât mina-l-mekrumât*, "To bury daughters is an act of mercy"; the reference in the latter is to the practice of burying female children alive immediately after birth, which was still prevalent (though not widely spread) among the pagan Arabs at the time of the Prophet's mission. The lot of women among the Arabs of the Ignorance was a hard one; and it is most probable that the practice in question was perpetuated, if it did not begin, in the desire to save the family the shame of seeing its women ill-used or otherwise disgraced. This is to be inferred from the account given in the Aghânî (xii. 150) of the reason why Qeys son of 'Âsim, a lord of the tribe of Temîm, adopted it. To this man was due the revival of the custom in the Prophet's time after it had almost died out; a terrible tale is told of his burial alive of the only one of his daughters who was saved at birth and brought up in another family unknown to him.

v. 5. The use of the imperfect (*kuntu ubqî*) in the second hemistich of this verse is worth noticing. The speaker looks forward to the time when his daughter will be left fatherless, and find no love such as that which she found in him.

## IX.

Hitâñ son of el-Mo'allâ.

أَنْزَلَنِي الْدَّهْرُ عَلَى حُكْمِهِ مِنْ شَاهِنْخَةِ عَالَى إِلَى خَفْضِ  
وَغَالَنِي الْدَّهْرُ بِوْرَرِ الْغَنْدِي فَلَيْسَ لِي مَالٌ سِوَى عِرْضِي  
أَبْكَانِي الْدَّهْرُ وَيَا رِبَّا أَضْحَكَنِي الْدَّهْرُ بِمَا يُرْضِي  
لَوْلَا بُنْيَاتُ كَرْغَبِ الْقَطَا رُدِّدَ مِنْ بَعْضٍ إِلَى بَعْضِ

لَكَانَ لِي مُضْطَرْبٌ وَاسِعٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ ذَاتِ الطُّولِ وَالْعَرْضِ  
 وَإِذْمَانَ أَرْلَادُنَّا بَيْنَنَا أَكْبَادُنَا تَمْشِي عَلَى الْأَرْضِ  
 لَوْ هَبَّتِ الْرِّيحُ عَلَى بَعْضِهِمْ لَمْتَفَعَّتْ عَيْنِي مِنْ الْغَهْضِ

Fortune has brought me down (her wonted way)  
 from station great and high to low estate ;  
 Fortune has rent away my plenteous store :  
 of all my wealth honour alone is left ;  
 Fortune has turned my joy to tears : how oft  
 did Fortune make me laugh with what she gave !  
 But for these girls, the Qaṭa's downy brood,  
 unkindly thrust from door to door as hard—  
 5 Far would I roam and wide to seek my bread  
 in Earth that has no lack of breadth and length ;  
 Nay, but our children in our midst, what else  
 but our hearts are they walking on the ground ?  
 If but the wind blow harsh on one of them,  
 mine eye says no to slumber all night long.

## NOTES.

The metre is the third form of the *Sari*‘, and consists of two diiamb (each commutable to — — ˘ — and — ˘ ˘ —) followed by a cretic ( — ˘ —); in the second hemistich, which is catalectic, the cretic becomes a spondee :—

˘ ˘ ˘ — | ˘ ˘ ˘ — | — ˘ — || ˘ ˘ ˘ — | ˘ ˘ ˘ — | — —

Of the poet I have ascertained nothing.

v. 4. 'The *Qaṭa* is the sand-grouse; it is most probably identical with the Hebrew *Qâ'ath* (A. V. "pelican").

The second hemistich of this verse has strangely perplexed the commentators. The following is a translation of et-Tebrîzî's note upon it. "Rudidna min ba'din ilâ ba'dî means—'They were gathered together to me in a brief space of time, one born of a second wife after another born of the first, one by the side of another.' Another reading is rededna min ba'din ilâ ba'dî, with the active form of the verb and the personal pronoun joined to the second *ba'dî*; the meaning of this would be 'they have bowed me and bent one part of my back towards another.' Or, if we adopt the first reading, the line may mean that these daughters of his had been wedded, and were turned away together with their little girls; *mardûdeh* is used in the sense of a divorced woman, and *ilâ* is sometimes equivalent to *ma'* (together with): you say *hâdâ ilâ dâka* ('this with that') meaning *ma'a dâka*; taking it in this way, *min ba'din ilâ ba'dî* will be in the place of the accusative of condition to *rudidna*, i. e., they have been divorced together.

with their children.' Or you may read *rûdîdna* as before, and *min ba'dî ilâ ba'dî*, giving both the *ba'ds* the affixed pronoun; the sense would then be 'They were in my loins, and when I begot them they entered (were turned) into my heart, which burns by reason of them through excess of affection.' Another reading is *jumi'na min ba'dîn ilâ ba'dî* [the sense of which would be the same as the first explanation given by et-Tebrîzî]. Abû Hilâl says: ' *rûdîdna min ba'dîn ilâ ba'dî* is a sentence which hides but little meaning: perhaps he intended to say that they were born from different mothers, and were thrust from one to the other: but he did not express himself plainly.' "

So far et-Tebrîzî; it appears to me that the difficulty (which consists in the use of the past, *rûdîdna*, for the future which the poet contemplates for his daughters, and which has led the commentators to try to explain that verb as referring to something already past) may be solved by supposing that the speaker puts his anticipation in the form of an event already come to pass. Such a construction is the common one for optatives, (*jezâhu-llâh*, &c.,) and is so used in places where there can be no question of the theological explanation which refers it to the foreknowledge of God, to whom future is as past; see *e. g.*, Hamâseh, p. 67.—

بَقِيَتْ وَفَرِي وَانْحَرَفَتْ عَنِ الْمُعْلَمِيَّ دَلِيقِيْتْ أَضَيَّافِي بِوْجِي عَبُوسِ

Then, again, there are many instances in which what is spoken of as a past event is explained as a future one, *e. g.*, in Ham., p. 172.—

إِنَّمَّا يَنْهَا فِي أَرْضِ فَارِسٍ مُّوْتَقِيْ أَحَوَالًا

where the commentary (perhaps needlessly) understands that the poet, in his foreknowledge of what awaits him, speaks of it as already come to pass. So also in Ham., p. 252, Jahâdar son of Dubcy'ah says—

قَدْ يَتَهَمَّتْ بِنَتِي وَأَمَّتْ كُنَّتِي

plainly referring to a bereavement and widowhood which are to be after his death in the fight before engaging in which he utters the verses. These instances seem amply to justify us in understanding the words in their natural sense—"pushed (or thrust) from one to another without help or kindness"; nothing could be more far-fetched than all the explanations given by et-Tebrîzî.



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TO

JOURNAL, ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BENGAL, PART I,

FOR

1877.

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